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State Department review
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7 March 1952

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Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

S U M M A R Y

25X1

1.

2.

3.

25X1

4. Political showdown in Thailand reportedly imminent (page 4).

NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5.

25X1

6. British and Turks fear new Egyptian disturbances (page 6).

7.

25X1

8.

WESTERN EUROPE

9. Italy to make counter-proposal on Trieste issue (page 7).
10. US observers analyze forthcoming Italian elections (page 8).

25X1

11.

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25X1A

- 2 -

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

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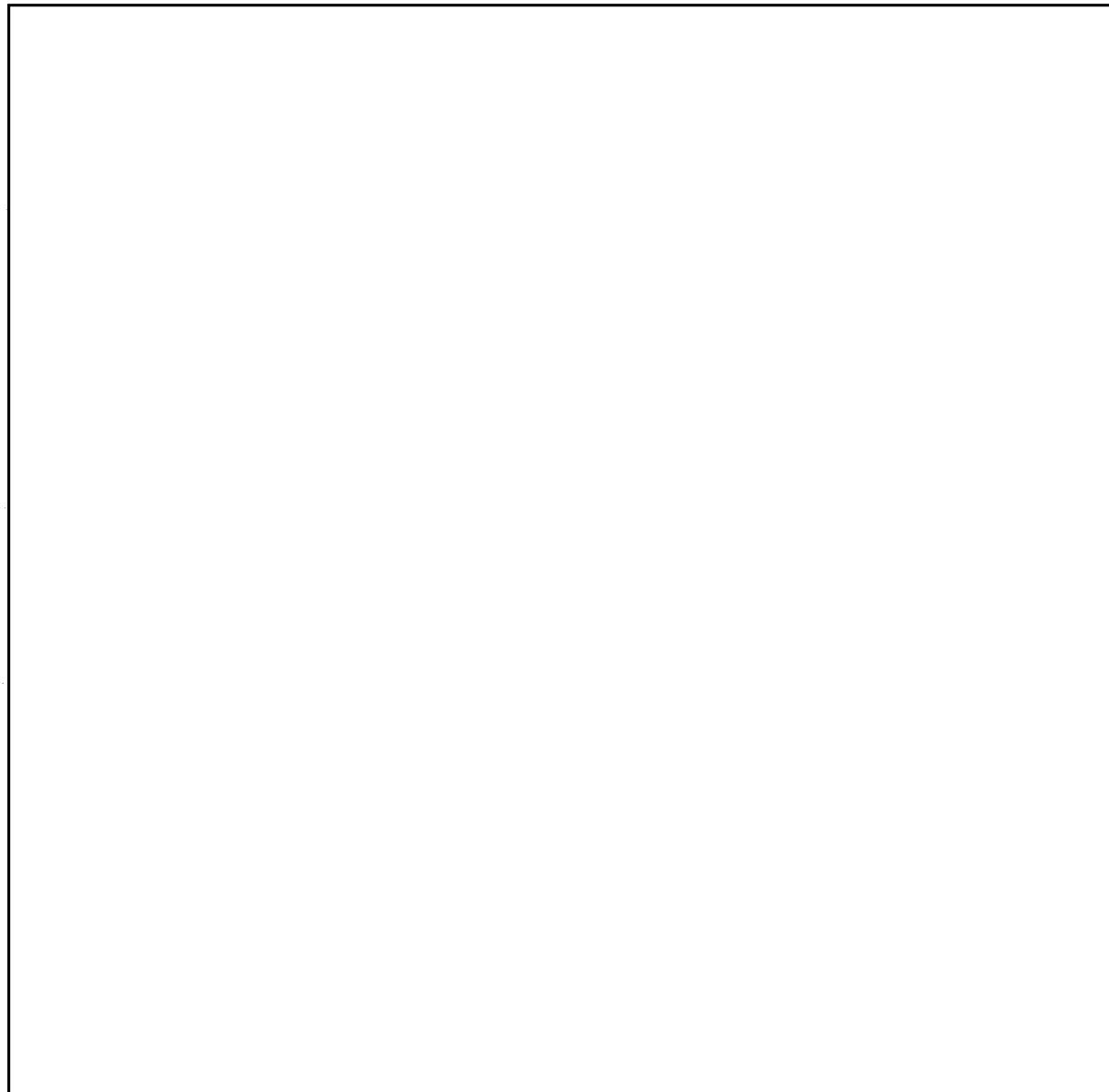
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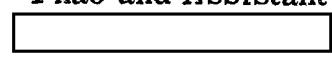
4. Political showdown in Thailand reportedly imminent:

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Promulgation of the new Thai constitution
and the simultaneous resignation of the cabinet,
scheduled for 8 March, will precipitate a
showdown between Police Director General

Phao and Assistant Army Commander Sarit,



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25X1A

- 4 -

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

Premier Phibun, according to this report, will not be reappointed, because Phao is allegedly backing his father-in-law, Army Commander Phin, for the Premiership. Sarit favors Seni Pramote, a prominent royalist.

Comment: [redacted]

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25X1 [redacted]
Friction between the Phao and Sarit factions, which together control Premier Phibun's government, has been frequently reported for months. To date, an overt clash has probably been prevented by a systematic and apparently satisfactory allotment of the various economic and financial opportunities for unrestricted exploitation by the two groups.

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NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. [redacted]

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25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

6. British and Turks fear new Egyptian disturbances:

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British troops in the Suez Canal area, who would be called upon to occupy the delta region in case of a breakdown of public order in Egypt, have again been put on a 24-hour alert owing to British fears that disturbances may reoccur.

The Turkish Ambassador in Cairo believes that the British are "overplaying their animosity to the Wafd Party which may backfire in the end and even produce chaos in the country." He added, however, that Turkey still supports the British position in Egypt.

Comment: Underneath the outward calm which Prime Minister Hilali is maintaining under martial law is the continuing possibility of violence induced by the Wafd Party. In spite of the strong Palace support for the Premier, it is an open question how far Hilali can go against the well-organized and well-entrenched Wafd.

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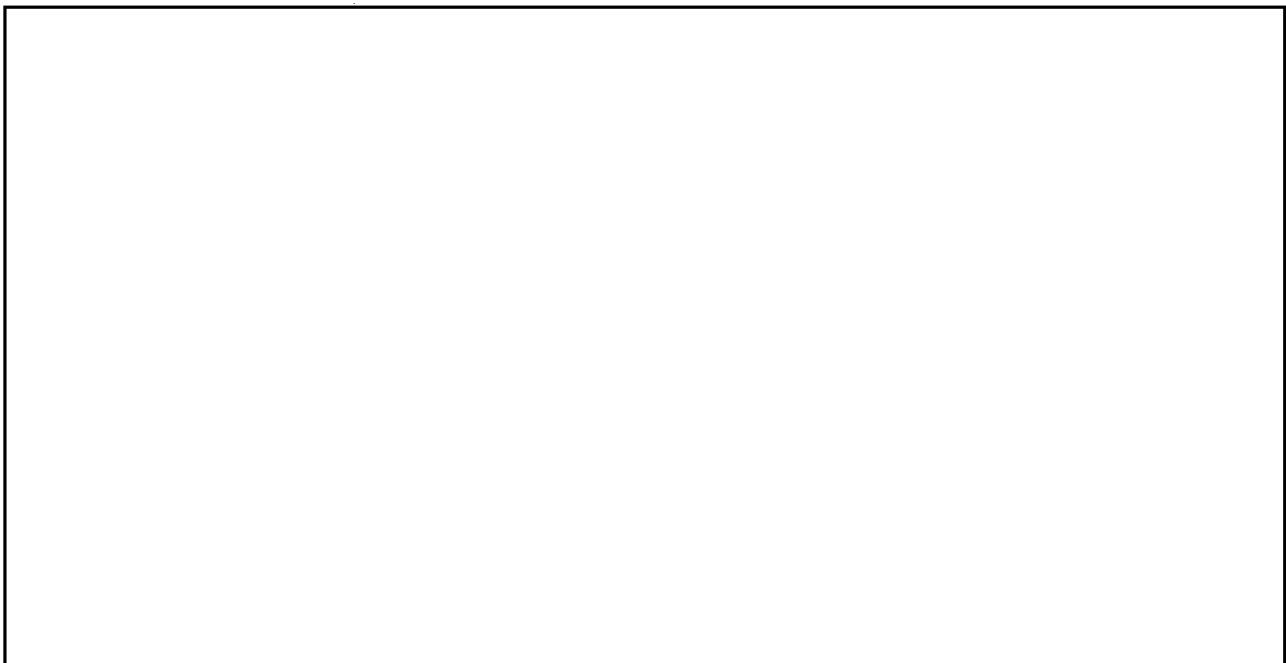
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WESTERN EUROPE

9. Italy to make counter-proposal on Trieste issue:

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Italy, having rejected Yugoslavia's proposal for a joint administration of the entire Free Territory of Trieste, now plans to suggest that a general plebiscite be held in both zones

to determine the territory's ultimate nationality,

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The Italian Foreign Office believes this proposal will be unacceptable to Yugoslavia and will therefore provide an easy escape from further negotiations at this time.

25X1

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25X1A

Approved For Release 2003/10/22 : CIA-RDP79T00975A000600110001-2

Comment: The plebiscite proposal is an attempt by the Italian Government to give the impression both to the West and to the Italian people that it is actively working for a solution of the Trieste issue. The Foreign Office's estimate of its chances of being accepted by Yugoslavia confirms previous indications that Italy does not desire a settlement now.

10. US observers analyze forthcoming Italian elections:

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The American Embassy in Rome reports that the prospect for "democratic" success in the Italian local elections scheduled for 25 May in southern Italy is "fairly good" in most large cities, including Naples. In Rome, however, the strength of those pro-government parties which are willing to be linked in a common electoral list is insufficient to give a "safe" margin, because the Democratic Socialists and the Republicans are still reluctant to be associated even indirectly with the Monarchs.

Comment: The local elections are particularly useful as harbingers of results in the national elections, planned for late this year or early 1953. Observers believe that even if the Democratic Socialist leadership decided to enter an electoral alliance with the government parties and Monarchs, their party following would in many cases refuse.

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